



Guild of Students
University of Birmingham



Candidate Brief for the position of
External Trustee

October 2022



Who are the Guild of Students?

The Guild is a successful, vibrant and exciting organisation, with an extensive history leading the student movement and a bright future ahead. A registered charity, we are the students' union for more than 38,000 students at the University of Birmingham.

We represent our members to the University and aim to be the authoritative voice on the issues that matter the most to Birmingham students. We help students develop skills outside of study, have fun, meet new people and make sure that they can get the best from Birmingham! Find out more at: guildofstudents.com/about/who-we-are

We're very proud that our work for Birmingham students has been recognised as sector-leading and we've recently been awarded:



It is an exciting time for the Guild as we look to 'build back' from COVID-19 and continue to deliver excellent services for our students, while retaining some of the flexibility and adaptability seen over the last two years. As we move ahead with our new 2022-2027 strategic plan, a strong and active Trustee Board will be essential to support and guide the organisation's work.

Our Values:

- **Inclusive:** Embracing diversity in all its forms
- **Representative:** Standing up for the issues that matter
- **Supportive:** Offering help and advice when needed
- **Fun:** Making Birmingham the best place to be

Your Voice
Only Louder



Our Services and Impacts

Like organisations across the world, your Guild of Students continued to face many challenges over the past year due to COVID-19. From our planned activity often changing at very short notice, to another lockdown which meant large periods of time when staff were all working from home, circumstances have meant constantly changing and developing new and exciting ways to engage students against a backdrop of online fatigue and digital overload for our members.

Despite all this, our determined and resilient staff and Officer team have risen to the challenge and kept going to ensure we remained focussed in our objectives, motivated to provide the very best service to our members and stakeholders, and that we never stopped providing the best possible service to our students.

2020-21 was the third year of our most recent strategy and our Impact Report outlines our last year of work, what went well, what didn't quite go to plan, what we need to learn from, and most importantly, how we can make the next academic year bigger and better.

This Impact Report is split into our five strategic aims:

- Engagement & Participation
- Communication & Branding
- Academic & Learning Experience
- Representing the Student Voice
- Mental Health & Financial Assistance

Read on for a breakdown of our achievements and service delivery over this difficult period: guildofstudents.com/about/impactreport

As we build back from COVID, we are looking ahead to the development of our next Strategic Plan (2022-2027) and new ways we can respond to the changing landscape of higher education and the needs of our members. The role of our Trustee Board is key to the development of a sound and deliverable strategy to make sure we provide the best possible student experience.



How the Guild of Students works

The Guild is led by elected officers, staff and volunteers. Students help run the Guild and are at the heart of our work.

The Trustee Board

The Board oversees the Guild. Comprised of sabbatical, external and student trustees with a wealth of experience, the Board ensures the good governance of the Guild. Its role is to ensure the Guild is legally, reputationally and financially viable.

Guild Officers

Every year, students elect officers to represent them and lead the Guild. Each officer looks after a different area of University life and it's their job to represent student views and improve the student experience at Birmingham. There are 7 full-time and 7 part-time Officers.

Staff

Our staff team, which includes 70+ core staff and more than 350 students working part-time, supports the Officer Team to achieve the Guild's plans. They also manage the Guild's departments and services.

Volunteers

Many students volunteer their time in different ways to support the work of the Guild – from student representatives and society committees to our mentoring and buddying schemes.



About the role of External Trustee

The Trustee Board ensures that the Guild meets the needs of its members and fulfils its responsibilities for the good governance of the Guild, in line with charity law. The role of the Trustees is to support the work of the Guild in line with our visions and values.

The Guild is seeking to recruit External Trustees to join its Trustee Board. This is a fantastic opportunity to join an award-winning, multi-million pound charity.

The Trustee Board is ultimately responsible for overseeing the affairs of the Guild.

Our Trustees must ensure that the Guild is well run and delivers the objectives for which it has been set up. They must also ensure that the Guild works for and with its membership in all that it does, with a collective responsibility for the strategic direction of the organisation.

In this unique role, you will gain invaluable skills and experiences, and be part of a team that makes key decisions regarding the long-term future of the Guild. We are looking for individuals who are able to establish strong working relationships and take a cooperative approach to reach objective decisions.

The Guild values applications from a wide range of backgrounds that are reflective of the full diversity of Birmingham's community.

The Guild welcomes applications from a wide range of backgrounds that are reflective of the full diversity of Birmingham's community, in particular applicants from a **'BAME (Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority)** background as we seek to continually increase diversity within our governance structures.

We would encourage candidates with current or previous experience in a membership/charitable organisation; however this is not necessarily a requirement. We would be particularly interested to hear from individuals with experience of **Strategic & Change Management, and Communications and Social Media**, however these are not essential.

Ethos

The Guild of Students is looking for External Trustees who will support the vision and values of the Guild:

- A good networker with relationship-building experience.
- A good understanding of the public, third or HE sector, and current HE issues.
- A familiarity and interest in the work of Students' Unions and the needs of its members.
- Experience and knowledge of charity and governance processes.
- Able to provide direction, and support in a way that inspires confidence in and commitment from others.
- Robust judgement and the ability to seek and challenge information to reach and take decisions.
- Passionate about our organisation and wants to make a difference to students at the University of Birmingham.
- Undisputed personal integrity and a personal style that demonstrates authority, commitment and consistency.
- Ability to assimilate and analyse information quickly in order to debate issues at strategic levels.
- Demonstrates willingness to engage with students and attend high profile events in order to gain greater understanding of the role of the Guild and foster strong relationships.

Time commitment

The role of the External Trustee involves an average minimum time commitment of 3-4 hours every two months to attend the Trustee Board meeting (six times per year, generally on a Monday evening between 5:30pm and 9:00pm) and reading time to support those meetings. Online attendance at meetings is possible but cannot always be guaranteed. Please get in touch to discuss if you would like to enquire about this.

- Regular commitments on an annual basis include:
 - Two half development/away day Board meetings (usually prior to a Board meeting).
 - Attendance at Guild and University high profile events e.g. Elections Results Night, subject to availability.
- The position of External Trustee is appointed for a period of 3 years, with the option to serve a second 3 year term.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the External Trustee are covered below:

- To actively contribute, together with the other trustees, the Officer Team and the Chief Executive to ensure that the Guild has a clear strategic direction that meets the needs of its members and is focussed on achieving these.
- To be an ambassador of the Guild, safeguarding and developing its reputation and values.
- To protect and manage the assets of the Guild, taking all due care over their security, ensuring that they are used exclusively in pursuance of the agreed objectives.
- To ensure that the Guild uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives.
- To support the work of the Guilds' Trustee Board and Sub-Committees, where necessary, in the event of sickness, holiday or other exceptional circumstances.
- To adhere to all relevant Guild policy with particular reference to staffing, health and safety and the environment.
- To ensure that the Guild complies with its governing documents, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees, using any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the Board reach sound decisions.

Expenses

The role is voluntary and therefore unpaid. However, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed and the Guild can offer administrative support if needed.

Location

University of Birmingham Guild of Students,
Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham, B15 2TU

How to apply

Apply online at: <https://apply.guildofstudents.com/position/external-trustee>

Closing date for applications: 9:00am, Monday 17 October 2022

Interview date: 9:30am-4:00pm, Thursday 27 October

Interviews in person at the Guild of Students, Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham, B15 2TU. Online interviews may be arranged if necessary.

If you would like to speak to somebody about this role, please contact Sam Jones, Executive Assistant by email: s.jones@guild.bham.ac.uk



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